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A
PART CULAR NARRATIVE
O F
WHAT HAS HAPPENED
Relative to a Paper published in the 51st Vol. of the
PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS,
ENTITLED,

An Account of a Remarkable Operation on a broken Arm, &c.

In which the
PRINCIPAL FACTS
ARE
PROVED by EVIDENCE.

(Price One Shilling.)

PARTICULAR NARRATIVE

WITH THE HAPPENINGS

AT THE BATTLE OF THE BAPTISTE, IN THE BOROPOHOMA TERRITORY,

BY J. G. BROWN

IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. I.

BY J. G. BROWN



READY FOR PUBLICATION.

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An Account of a Remarkable Operation on a broken Arm, &c.

In which the
Principal Facts are proved by Evidence.

By CHARLES WHITE, F. R. S.
Member of the Corporation of Surgeons in London,
And Surgeon to the MANCHESTER INFIRMARY.

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A
LITERATURE MARITIMA
BY
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1840. FROM THE LIBRARY OF
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A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THAT this dispute may be the better understood, the reader will find prefixed the case of Robert Elliot, as it was published in the 51st vol. of the Philosophical Transactions; Mr. J. F's Letter, inclosing Mr. Burchall's first printed account of this affair, extracted from the British Chronicle of Sept. 7, 1761; my reply, taken from the same paper of the 25th of that month; and his rejoinder, dated October 24, 1761, but not inserted in the Chronicle till the 10th of March 1762.

A N



An Account of a remarkable Operation on a broken Arm; by Mr. Charles White, Surgeon at Manchester, communicated by George Lloyd, Esq; F. R. S.

Read March 27, 1760.

ROBERT ELLIOT, of Eyam, in Derbyshire, a very healthful boy of nine years old, had the misfortune, about Midsummer, in the year 1759, by a fall, to fracture the humerus, near the middle of the bone. He was immediately taken to a bone-setter in that neighbourhood, who applied a bandage and splints to his arm, and treated him as properly, as, I suppose, he was capable of, for two or three months. His endeavours, however, were by no means productive of the desired effect, the bones not being at all united. A surgeon of eminence, in Bakewell,

Bakewell, was afterwards called in; but, as soon as he found he could be of no service to him, and as the case was very curious, he advised the lad's friends to send him to the infirmary at Manchester: He was accordingly brought thither the Christmas following, and admitted an in-patient. Upon examination, we found it to have been a simple oblique fracture, and that the ends of the bone rode over each other. His arm was become not only intirely useles:, but even a burthen to him, and not likely to be otherwise, as there was little probability that it would ever unite, it being now near six months since the accident happened.

Amputation was therefore proposed as the only method of relief; but I could not give my consent to that; for, as the boy was young, and had a good constitution, it was hardly possible that it could be owing to any fault in the solids or fluids, but that either nature was disappointed in her work by frequent friction, while the callus was forming; or rather

rather, that the oblique ends of the bone, being sharp, had divided a part of a muscle, and some portion of it had probably insinuated itself betwixt the two ends of the bone, preventing their union: Which ever of these might be the case, I was of opinion, that he might be relieved by the following operation, viz. to make a longitudinal incision down to the bone, to bring out one of the ends of it (which might be done with great ease, as the arm was very flexible) and cut off the oblique end, either by the saw or cutting-pincers; then to bring out the other end of the bone, and cut off that likewise; afterwards to re-place them end to end, and then treat it entirely as a compound fracture.

The objections made, by the other gentlemen concerned, to this proposal, were, 1st, The danger of wounding the humeral artery by the knife; 2dly, the laceration of the artery by bringing out the ends of the bones; and, 3dly, that we had no authority for such an operation.

tion. As to the first, that was easily obviated, by making the incision on the side of the arm opposite to the humeral artery: The place of election appeared to me to be at the external and lower edge of the deltoid muscle, as the fracture was very near to the insertion of that muscle into the humerus; the danger of wounding the vessel not only being by that means avoided, but after the operation, while the patient was confined to his bed, the matter would be prevented from lodging, and the wound be easily come at, to renew the dressings. The second objection will not appear to be very great, when we consider, that in compound fractures, the bone is frequently thrust with great violence through the integuments, and seldom attended with the laceration of any considerable artery; and, as this would be done with great care and caution, that danger would appear very trifling. The third and last objection is no more than a general one to all improvements.

This

This method, which I have been proposing, was at last resolved upon, and I assisted in the operation, which was performed by a gentleman of great abilities in his profession, on the 3d of January, in the present year. The patient did not lose above a spoonful of blood in the operation, though the tourniquet was not made use of. When the operation and dressings were finished, the limb was placed in a fracture-box contrived on purpose, the lad confined to his bed, and the rest of the treatment nothing different from that of a compound fracture.

The wound was nearly healed in a fortnight's time, when an erisipelas came on, and spread itself all over the arm, attended with some degree of swelling; this, by fomentations, and the antiphlogistic method, soon went off, and the cure proceeded happily, without any other interruption. In about six weeks after the operation, the callus began to form, and is now grown quite firm:

B. That

That arm is as long as the other, but somewhat smaller, by such long-continued bandage; he daily acquires strength in it, and will soon be fit to be discharged.

MANCHESTER,
March 17, 1760.

C. WHITE.

To the EDITOR of LLOYD'S EVENING POST.

— *Tulit alter honorem.* —

S I R,

IN your Evening Chronicle of the 5th of August last, you have republished from the Philosophical Transactions, vol. 51.

Account of a remarkable operation on a broken arm, by Charles White, surgeon at Manchester, communicated by G. Lloyd, Esq; F. R. S. Read before the Royal Society.

On seeing this title of the case, could any man doubt, but that Mr. Charles White, surgeon, had performed the operation? — whereas the contrary is well known here, and I would have the truth publickly known, that the said operation and cure were performed and perfected, only, by James Burchall, surgeon to the Manchester Infirmary, and, that Mr. White had no more to do in it, than any other of the surgeons, who attended, as is usual, at such operations.

It is true, Mr. White does acknowledge the operation was not performed by himself, but in a manner no less assuming to himself all the merit. Had his narration been continued in the style of the first paragraph,

raph, I should not have taken the least notice; but in his following paragraphs there is so much of the Egotism, and his proposals, objections, and his answers, &c. that I could not forbear to request my friend Mr. Burchall to send me his account of the case; and to desire your impartial favour in giving it a place in your Chronicle, which will oblige

*Manchester,
Sept. 2, 1761.*

Your constant Reader,

J. F.

AS the case of Robert Elliot, so artfully written by Mr. Charles White, and sent to George Lloyd, Esq; without my knowledge or consent, to be communicated to the Royal Society, hath met with a place in the Philosophical Transactions, and since been published in the Monthly and Critical Reviews, and in Lloyd's Chronicle, wherein Mr. White has taken the sole merit of the cure to himself, I think, without apology; I may be allowed to declare the truth, that Robert Elliot was my patient, and was admitted as such into the Infirmary at Manchester on the 24th of December, 1759, when, after a previous consultation (agreeable to the printed rules) it was agreed to try the method, as related by Mr. White in his paper; and accordingly I performed the operation on the 3d of January, 1760, in presence of him and several of the faculty (who, as is usual in capital operations, give their assistance) by making an incision through the integuments, in the Interstice of the muscles on the external part of the humerus, and forcing the extremities of the fractured bone, out of the wound, which were afterwards cut off with the cutting forceps: I then reduced the bones as near as could be in point of contact, and placed the arm in a fracture-box, afterwards I treated it as a compound fracture. I duly attended him till the cure was completed, which was about the beginning of April; but for fear of any accident affecting the arm, as the boy was of a very lively and heedless disposition, and at a considerable distance from the place of his abode, he was not discharged from the Infirmary till the 5th of May, 1760.

JAMES BURCHALL.

Published in Lloyd's Evening Chronicle, Sept. 7th, 1761.

To the EDITOR of LLOYD'S EVENING POST.

SIR,

A Letter from Mr. James Burchall, introduced by another, pretended to be written by a friend of his (both of them published in your Chronicle of the 7th of this month) oblige me, in common justice to myself, to give you this trouble. The intention of them was to insinuate to the publick, that I had misrepresented a case, published in the 51st vol. of the Philosophical Transactions, entitled,

An account of a remarkable operation on a broken arm; by Mr. CHARLES WHITE, Surgeon, at Manchester: Communicated by GEORGE LLOYD, Esq; F. R. S.

I shall make no remarks upon the *inaccuracy* with which Mr. J. F. has caused you to print this title, in which, by the alteration of a point, the sense was entirely subverted. I am ready to attribute it rather to his heedlessness, than to any wilful design of misrepresentation. In these letters I am charged with *assuming* to myself *the sole merit of the cure*. How far I did this, must be left to every impartial reader of the transaction. The merit I assumed to myself was only that of the invention; and, if the invention be of any service to the publick, that merit I believe neither Mr. Burchall nor his friend will deny me. The operation I nowhere called my own; I only asserted, that "I assisted in it;" and I said, that it "was performed by a gentleman of great abilities in his profession." Had I thought that the share which Mr. Burchall had in the operation could possibly have redounded to his credit, I should have had no objection to entring into particulars and to the insertion of his name, especially as I have always looked upon him as a man of honour and knowledge in his profession, and have constantly entertained a great regard for him; but I am now publickly called upon, and I think myself enjoined to an *explanation* of the account I have given, lest the publick should imagine that I have any way *misled* a society, which has for a long time been one of the principal ornaments of this nation.

Previous

Previous to any consultation, I proposed to Dr. Mainwaring and Dr. Brown, at their own houses, the mode of operation which was afterwards pursued: And I must here do them the justice to declare, that I verily believe it never would have taken place, if they had not seconded me in my proposal. Mr. Burchall was for amputation. It was he that principally made the objections mentioned in the Transaction; and though my method was agreed upon, he declared both before, during the time of, and for some weeks after the operation, that he was very apprehensive it could never answer. The patient was Mr. Burchall's. He made the incision in the place which I had pointed out. *I brought out one of the ends of the bone*, which he attempted to saw off, but hesitated upon finding it to be attended with some difficulty, the incision having been made too small. Upon this, I cut off the end with the forceps, replaced it, and brought out the other end, which I also cut off. The dressings and bandage were applied by Mr. Burchall. It was I that contrived the fracture-box; and the first being made too large, a second, which was made under my direction, was used as long as the patient was confined to his bed. I very frequently attended at the dressings; for though the patient did not fall under my immediate care, I was anxious for the success of my proposal, and knew that if it did not succeed, I was to bear the blame, as the inventor of the operation.

For the truth of these particulars I appeal to every disinterested gentleman present at the consultation and operation, and (if I have represented any thing wrong) I publickly call upon them to a denial of any of the facts I have related.

Manchester,
Sept. 18, 1761.

I am, sir, yours, &c.
CHARLES WHITE.

To the EDITOR of LLOYD'S EVENING POST.

SIR,

THAT the publick may be better able to judge of the dispute betwixt Mr. Charles White and myself, concerning the invention, method of operation, and cure, performed on the arm of Robert Elliott,

liot, late a patient of mine in the Infirmary at Manchester; I think it necessary to send you the following history of the case, which I hope you will be kind enough to publish in your next evening paper, with my observations and remarks on Mr. Charles White's disingenuous Letter, published in your Chronicle of the 25th of September last. About the latter end of the year 1759, I received a letter from John Wright, Esq; of Eyam, in Derbyshire, acquainting me with the unhappy circumstance of a poor boy, in the said town, who had the misfortune to break his arm several months before (which, notwithstanding all the endeavours that had been used to unite the bone, still remained as loose as on the first day of the accident) and desiring my opinion, that, if I thought any thing could be done to save his arm, he should be glad to send him to Manchester to be admitted under my care in the Infirmary; in answer to which, I told his son-in-law, Mr. Ashwood, who then lived here, in what manner I thought his arm might be cured, but that, till I saw the boy, I could not so properly judge of it; accordingly he was brought to Manchester on the 23d of December, 1759, and the same evening I examined his arm at Mr. Ashwood's, when I gave my opinion that it might be cured without amputation. The day following he was admitted my patient in the Infirmary, where I again examined his arm, and called on the gentlemen then present to do the same, who gave their opinions for amputation only; to this I did not assent, and the boy's master strongly remonstrated against it, saying, he could have had that done at home, and desired I would try all possible means, rather than cut it off; upon which I told him to leave the boy, and I would consider further of the method I had before proposed, which was the same that was afterwards put in execution; to corroborate the truth of which, I beg leave to appeal to two certificates, of which I have given copies at the end of this letter, which are dated the 21st of October instant, and are signed by John Wright, Esq; and the said Mr. Thomas Ashwood. Whether or no Mr. White might have heard of my design I cannot positively determine, but I am the more inclined to believe that was the case, from his asking, upon first seeing the boy,

boy, which was the day after his admission, what method had been proposed for his relief; on being told none but amputation, only that I had said I would take him in and consider of it; he, upon examining the arm a little, immediately replied, that he thought there was a method by which it might be saved without amputation, and then described the method which I had before spoke of to Mr. Ashwood, which was afterwards pursued. Mr. White, in his account published in the 51st volume of the Philosophical Transactions, allows the operation to be performed by a gentleman of great abilities in his profession, but at the same time assumes to himself the sole merit of the invention, and mode of operation; and, in his letter of the 25th ult. in an explanation (as he calls it) of his former account, he not only lays claim to the invention, but likewise to the operation and cure, by telling you that I was for amputation, and that " I principally made the objections mentioned in the Transactions;" that I was not for amputation, I think I have sufficiently proved, besides, in the present case, that could only be the dernier ressource. The only objection which I made was that of lacerating the humeral artery, by forcing out the ends of the bone, and, as I was to perform the operation, the starting any objection at the consultation could not be construed otherwife than a desire to have their opinions on such operations. He further asserts, that though his method was agreed on, " I declared, both before, during the time, and for some weeks after the operation, that I was apprehensive it would never answer;" in contradiction to this, I can prove, that I frequently declared it was the only method, both before and after the operation was concluded on, and the method I had proposed on the receipt of Mr. Wright's letter. He next says, " I made the incision in the place he had pointed out;" Pray what occasion for his pointing out? when, several days before the operation, he cannot but remember, that as I was shewing a young gentleman where I intended to make the incision, upon his coming into the room I repeated the same to him. He then says, " he brought out one of the ends of the bone, which I attempted to saw off, but hesitated, upon finding it to be attended

" tended with some difficulty, the incision having been
" made too small;" I allow that he turned out one of
the ends of the bone, but not both, as he hath asserted;
that upon my attempting to saw off one end, which was
his proposal, on finding it impracticable, I immediately
called for the cutting forceps, which he very officiously
laid hold of, and cut off a small portion of the bone;
I then took the forceps from him, and cut off some
more from that end, and afterwards cut off the other
end, &c. As the incision was found large enough to
answer my intention in performing the operation, and
was not then or afterwards enlarged, how comes he now
to say, it was too small? Upon opening the arm I
proposed its being placed in a fracture-box, which I
thought necessary, for the more immeditate conveniency
of dressing, &c. and Mr. White, with his usual officiousness (whilst I was otherwise employ'd) said, on his
going out of the room, if I pleased, he would give
orders for one: I thinking this a matter of small conse-
quence, told him he might; accordingly one was
brought, which proving considerably too large, a second
was made less, and that not answering the purpose so
well as I could wish, was altered by my direction, and
used as long as I thought necessary.

From what has been said, I think it appears clearly,
that the assistance which Mr. White boasts to have given
in the operation, was an act of over-officiousness, as the
patient was mine, and under my directions. It would
be tedious to analize the whole of his letter, and I
should not have mentioned these particulars, but to shew
that the manner of representing facts is very different,
for different purposes: I must remark, that if Mr. White's
opinion of my abilities, or his esteem of me as a man
of honour and knowledge in my profession, was consistent
with his declarations, that he would have conferred
with me upon, or at least have informed me of his de-
sign of communicating that remarkable operation; in
which case, if I had acquiesced in his relation, he would
have been justly entitled to the merit he has assumed;
but as he did not, I, surely, cannot be condemned in
saying, that he has been endeavouring to raise a charac-
ter and reputation to himself, on account of that ope-
rations,

ration, without acknowledging that I was the person who had the conduct and management of it.

Manchester,
Oct. 24, 1761.

I am, sir, your's, &c.
JAMES BURCHALL.

I REMEMBER very well, upon the return of Edmund Marsden, from Manchester (the master of Robert Elliott) to Eyam, he told me, that Mr. Burchall was the only one who was against amputation.

Oct. 21, 1761.

J. WRIGHT.

I WAS present when Robert Elliott was admitted into the Infirmary, and remember that amputation was the only method proposed by the gentlemen there, except Mr. Burchall, who said he could propose a method to save the arm, which he had before told me of more than once at my house.

Oct. 21, 1761.

THOMAS ASHWOOD.

C A Par-

-ticular bleeding happened to Robert Elliott, but nothing can be more rare, as he had not been cut or wounded before, and the only method of saving his arm was to amputate it. The arm is now in a very bad condition, and the patient is very ill, but he is improving, and I hope he will recover.



A

Particular Narrative, &c.

A Publick dispute is a task of so disagreeable a nature, that nothing but the vindication of my character from the undeserved assaults it has received, could have induced me to appear in the light of a paper warriour.

When an invention has been crowned with success, it has been no uncommon thing to see others attempting to bear away the honour from it's author. But in the case of Robert Elliot, Mr. Burchall did not only defer his claim till the success of the method proposed was evident, but even till the operation had, by repeated publications, received the approbation of the publick. The following narrative will make it evident, that I have done every thing I could, consistently

ently with truth, to prevent a quarrel. That the proposal of the mode pursued was entirely my own, and that no one particular has been by me injuriously misrepresented. Mr. Burchall himself confesses, that I performed a part, and that a principal part too, of the operation, by bringing out, and cutting off, that end of the bone which was first attempted. Had I performed even the whole, I should not have assumed to myself any merit upon that account; the practise was so easy after the method had been laid down, that any Pupil might have readily succeeded. I have frequently seen Mr. Burchall successfully perform much more difficult operations, and cannot therefore help attributing his hesitation in the midst of this, to his having no good opinion of the contrivance, and to his going about it therefore with a less degree of confidence than if he himself had been the inventor.

Mr. Lloyd went to London in the beginning of the year 1760; before he set

3 *AParticular Narrative, &c.*

out upon his journey I had shewn him (in the infirmary) Robert Elliot's arm, and described to him the mode of operation which had been pursued. Mr. Lloyd was pleased with the invention; and, after his arrival in town, accidentally mentioned it, at one of the meetings of the Royal Society, to some of the members, who begg'd he would write down into the country for a more particular relation. He accordingly wrote to his son, Dr. John Lloyd, to get him an account of the case from me; and, as he was then upon the point of leaving London, he desired it might be sent by the return of the post, that he might have an opportunity of shewing it to his friends at the next meeting of the Society.

Dr. John Lloyd called upon me with his father's message on Sunday the 16th of March, 1760, about noon. I was that day so much engaged, that I could not begin to write out the case till eleven o'clock at night, but finished it, before I went to bed, from notes which I had
kept

AParticular Narrative, &c. 4

kept by me since the time of the operation. The doctor came to me for it as soon as I was up the next morning: As I had wrote in haste, I desired he would read it over, and correct any grammatical mistakes, if any such had escaped me. It was then dated; he enclosed it in a letter (which he had brought along with him) to his father; and, as it was near the time of the post's going out, it was dispatched to the office immediately; I had no opportunity of shewing it to any person out of my own house, not even to my father, who was then at home, but three doors from me, and who never saw it (as I had not time to take a copy) till it was honoured with a publication in the Philosophical Transactions. Mr. Lloyd gave it to Dr. Birch, one of the secretaries, upon the 20th of March, who read it before the society upon the 27th of the same month, but not till after Mr. Lloyd had left London.

I now mentioned to some few persons what had been done, and, amongst the rest,

5 *AParticular Narrative, &c.*

rest, to Mr. Burchall in the surgeon's room in the Infirmary. I did not, however, tell it him in the manner of asking his leave; for I did not think it necessary to ask any man for liberty to publish my own inventions. As to my letting him know the case would be published, it was not in my power; I did not know it would, till I saw it had received a place in the Transactions: Every paper carried to the society is not favoured with a reading, nor is every reading followed by a publication. In the year 1752 an order, which is still in force, was made, that a committee of the members should be appointed to re-consider the papers read before them, and select out of them such, as they should think most proper for their future publications. The volume of the Transactions, which contains the case of Robert Elliot was published in May 1761. It was immediately sent down, not only to the Publick Library, but to several gentlemen in Manchester, and an abstract of the case was printed in

A Particular Narrative, &c. 6

in the Critical Review for the Month of June, and in the Monthly Review for July, and the whole case was re-published in the Universal Magazine for the month of July, and in the British Chronicle of the 5th of August; yet Mr. Burchall never so much as hinted (though I saw him every week in the Infirmary) nor had I any reason to imagine, that the publication had given him umbrage, till we accidentally met in the passage leading to the Old Coffee-House in the last week of August. I then told him, I was extremely sorry he had taken any thing I had done amiss, but that I thought I had mentioned him with as much respect as possible. He reply'd, his name was no where mentioned. I answered, if I had either seen him to have asked his leave, or had known that the mention of his name would have been agreeable, I should willingly have inserted it. I represented the hasty manner in which the paper went out of my hands, that the omission of his name was only owing to

my

7 *AParticular Narrative, &c.*

my over caution not to disoblige; that I had given away the merit of the operation from myself, and was desirous he should retain it; that the case was generally known in Manchester, and that I had taken every opportunity, wherever I had heard it mentioned, of declaring him to be the operator. He then asked me, if I was willing to do the same in any of the publick papers? I told him, I was willing to do it in any, in which the case had appeared. He said, he should be satisfied, if I would do it in Lloyd's Evening Chronicle; desired that I would draw up a paper in a proper form for insertion, and told me, he would call upon me for it, to send it to the Printer: Immediately, upon leaving him, I wrote what follows.

To

To the PUBLISHER of the BRITISH
CHRONICLE.

“ SIR,
“ THE Royal Society did me the
“ honour to publish, in the 51st
“ vol. part II. of the Philosophical
“ Transactions, An Account of a re-
“ markable Operation on a broken Arm,
“ (which account you have copied in
“ your Chronicle of the 5th of this
“ month.) In it, it is said, that I as-
“ sisted in the operation, which was
“ performed by *a gentleman of great abi-*
“ *lities in his profession.* I take the li-
“ berty of declaring, by the channel of
“ your paper, that the gentleman there
“ meant was Mr. James Burchall.

Yours, &c.

MANCHESTER,
August 27, 1761.

C. WHITE.

About three days afterwards I acci-
dentally met him in the Smithy-Door *;

* A Street in Manchester.

D

I told

9 *AParticular Narrative, &c.*

I told him, I had done what he desired; hoped I had put the paper into such a form as would be agreeable; had left it upon the desk in my study, to be ready when he should call, and that, whenever he pleased, he might insert it according to his proposal. I understood him that he would call, and left him, as I thought, in perfect friendship. Notwithstanding this, he never called, never sent any message, nor made any apology for his omission; but, without acquainting me, wrote the letter of the 2d of September; which, along with one subscribed J. F. was printed in Lloyd's paper of the 7th of the same month. I must here appeal to the publick, whether my behaviour to Mr. Burchall, whom I had been striving to oblige to the utmost of my power, was such as merited the return it met with.

Notwithstanding this treatment, I was still so averse to an open rupture, that after I had drawn up my answer to his and his friend's letter, I desired Dr. Brown would

would shew it to him before I dispatched it to the printer. I told the Doctor I was so far from having any design of distressing Mr. Burchall, that I should be glad to do him any service I could, consistently with my own reputation; that I did not wish him either to contradict himself, or submit to any meanness; but that my veracity had been called in question by his anonymous friend; and, as his own letter had been printed with his friend's, I could not help thinking him in some measure accountable for it; that therefore, except he chose to publish something to clear up my character, I should be obliged to print the answer which I had sent him; and that, as his friend's name was no where mentioned, I thought he might with honour subscribe the following.

Mr. or Mrs. you be well & well
etc. as has etc. etc. etc. To
etc. as follows etc. and etc. etc.
know

II A Particular Narrative, &c.

To the EDITOR of the BRITISH
CHRONICLE.

“ **N**otwithstanding what has been
“ said by my friend J. F. in your
“ Chronicle of the 7th of this month,
“ this is to satisfy the publick, that a
“ Case entitled, An Account of a re-
“ markable Operation on a broken Arm;
“ by Mr. Charles White, Surgeon, at
“ Manchester; communicated by George
“ Lloyd, Esq; F. R. S. read before the
“ Royal Society March 27th, 1760, and
“ published in the Philosophical Trans-
“ actions, vol. 51. part 2d, is a true
“ account, Mr. Charles White being the
“ sole inventor and proposer of that
“ operation.

MANCHESTER,

Sept. 17, 1761.

Dr. Brown shewed my answer to Mr.
Burchall in the Infirmary, and at the
same time told him the publication of it
would

would be dropt, if it was either agreeable to him to sign the above paper, which I had sent, or any thing else to the same purpose. Mr. Burchall made two objections; one was, that it contained an accusation of his friend, and the other, that I had laid claim to the sole invention; for he added, that though I had had the fortune to make the first mention of it, yet that he himself had thought of it as well as I. After this, Dr. Brown told me, that if I would erase the words---- *His Friend, and the sole Inventor*, he was in hopes he could prevail with him to sign the paper, and that he had promised to see him again the next morning. I replied, I should be glad to comply with any thing the Doctor thought proper, and made the proposed alterations; but, upon Dr. Brown's offering the paper again to Mr. Burchall, the latter absolutely refused to sign it.

The reasons why I gave Dr. Brown this trouble were these; I knew he was perfectly agreeable to Mr. Burchall; that he
was

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was thoroughly acquainted with the case upon his own knowledge; and that, from his known humanity, I did not doubt but he would do his utmost to bring about a reconciliation.

Upon Mr. Burchall's *refusal*, my answer was published in the British Chronicle of the 25th of September, 1761. On its arrival at Manchester, I was *sharply attacked* by him at the weekly board of the Infirmary, and there publicly charged with having asserted *falsities*. I told him, I was certain I had *strictly adhered to truth*, but that, if he thought otherwise, I was willing to abide by the following proposal.

That *he* and *I* should join in a petition to all the gentlemen present at the consultation and operation, to desire *them to depose*, before a *magistrate*, whatever they knew concerning the affair; that if he would consent to this, the depositions should be put into *his own hands*, he should be at *liberty* to *publish*, or *suppress* them, as he thought most conducive to his own interest,

interest, and that this should terminate the dispute betwixt us. I repeated this proposal to him three *several times* before the board, but he did not accept my offer. There does but one reason occur to me why Mr. Burchall should decline this offer, the persons present, both at the consultation and operation, are gentlemen of probity, and I have good reason to believe would at that time have complied with our request, if Mr. Burchall had accepted of my proposal, as they all of them seemed to shew a disposition to repair the breach between us.

Mr. Burchall's reply to mine of the 25th of September, dated October 24th, 1761, was published in the Chronicle of the 10th of March, 1762: In it he seems much disposed to play with words; and, indeed, the whole performance must appear of a very extraordinary nature to those, who, by their attendance at the Infirmary, can be the only evidences in regard to the case, from which the present dispute has arisen; and, to use his own

own words, must have effectually convinced them, that “ *The manner of representing Facts, is very different for different purposes.*”

He says, “ Whether or no Mr. White might have heard of my design, I cannot positively determine, but I am the more inclined to believe that was the case, from his asking, upon first seeing the lad, which was the day after his admission, what method had been proposed for his relief, &c.” an inference as absurd as it is false, and such a one as was perhaps never drawn from such a question ! He goes on with pretty round assertions, and appeals, for the truth of them, to two certificates, which by no means come up to the point in dispute : The first is from Mr. Wright, of Eyam, containing no more than a remembrance of what he had heard from Mr. Edmund Marfden ; but as Mr. Marfden has favoured me with his own evidence, this testimony of Mr. Wright’s will, I imagine, be esteemed of little

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consequence. The second is from Mr. Ashwood, who recollects that amputation was the only method proposed by any of the gentlemen of the Infirmary, except by Mr. Burchall, who said, he could propose a method to save the arm. The minutes of the board will testify I did not attend it upon the day Mr. Ashwood mentions, and therefore he cannot include me amongst the number of those who were for amputation; and I shall be able to prove, that if Mr. Burchall did not propose amputation in Mr. Ashwood's hearing, he did it, however, at another time. Mr. Ashwood does not say what was Mr. Burchall's method; and certainly, if he ever had any method except amputation to propose, he must himself, upon reflection, have been convinced of its insufficiency; else why did not he mention it to the boy's master, Mr. Marsden, when he was pressed to think of some method to save the arm, and told, that if it had been imagined amputation must have taken place, the operation

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might have been performed without the trouble of so long a journey? Why did not he propose it to some of the faculty, rather than to Mr. Ashwood, who could not be supposed to be a competent judge in surgical cases? Why did not he propose it at the consultation held in the Infirmary upon the Thursday after the boy's admission? (the only one in reality held upon this occasion:) there it was absolutely necessary *. Had not I at that time proposed, and been powerfully seconded in, the method which was afterwards pursued, there is the greatest reason to imagine amputation would have taken place, as Mr. Burchall then *proposed that method alone*. And I never heard, except from Mr.

* The printed rules and orders of the Publick Infirmary at Manchester enjoin,

RULE 51. That the physicians and surgeons do meet at the Infirmary every Thursday at eleven o'clock, to visit their in-patients, and to consult upon difficult cases, &c.

RULE 53. That no amputation, or other great operation, except an urgent occasion require it, be performed without a previous consultation of the physicians and surgeons; and that no one shall be admitted to see the practice of the house without their consent.

Ashwood,

Ashwood, that Mr. Burchall ever proposed any other method.

What danger might be apprehended from the operation I cannot pretend to say; I was always clear in my opinion, and often asserted, that if the plan which I had laid down was strictly adhered to, there was no more danger to be feared from this, than from any other capital operation in surgery.

In my letter of the 18th of September, 1761, it is said, that I brought out one of the ends of the bone, which he (Mr. Burchall) attempted to saw off, but hesitated upon finding it to be attended with some difficulty, the incision having been made too small. The following is Mr. Burchall's remark. " As the incision was found large enough to answer my intention in performing the operation, and was not then, or afterwards, enlarged, how comes he now to say it was too small?"

When I asserted that the incision had been made too small, I did not do it in

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order to throw dirt; for I should be sorry to have said any thing in this dispute, to which the case did not necessarily lead me; I thought my meaning had been sufficiently clear, but, as it does not seem to have been understood by Mr. Burchall, I shall endeavour to explain myself in a more ample manner.

My meaning was, that if the incision had been made larger, Mr. Burchall would have had no occasion to have hesitated when he attempted to saw off the end of the bone; and here he allows (though he denies me the rest of the invention) that the proposal for *sawing* off the end was my own, *apparently* because this *proposal* did not meet with success.

To saw off the end of a bone is no new practice in compound fractures; it has been performed by others as well as by myself; and I believe it will be allowed by every intelligent surgeon, that the saw, where it can be used, is for many, and very obvious reasons, superior to any other instrument.

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The * warmth of some of the expressions made use of by Mr. Burchall, in his last letter, will not, I hope, ever tempt me to retaliation.

I have, in a great measure, confined myself to facts; and, as Mr. Burchall has friends in the Infirmary, if I have misrepresented any thing, there can be no doubt made but I shall be sufficiently refuted.

In the beginning of October 1761, Mr. Bent, who resides in the Infirmary, gave Mr. Burchall and me each of us a copy of his account, with leave to publish it; Mr. Burchall asked Mr. Bent for liberty to print a part of it, which Mr. Bent refused, but again repeated, that he was welcome to publish the whole.

As Mr. Burchall did not think proper to annex this account to his last letter, I shall now myself give it to the publick. Whoever carefully considers his relation will, I imagine, easily perceive what part

* Disengenuous letter — officiously — usual officiousness — boasts — raising a character, &c.

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of it Mr. Burchall has been pleased to borrow, and at the same time too discern, that he has wrested the facts he has thought proper to give in such a manner as to make them suitable to his purpose. I am the more induced to believe that this was the real case, because Mr. Burchall himself told me, he had not kept any minutes of the affair *. Mr. Bent confirms many things I have advanced, and does not contradict me in a single article. He says, indeed, that Mr. Burchall one morning marked out the place he thought the most eligible for the incision, but at the same time tells you, that this was in the interim betwixt the consultation and operation. I had proposed the mode, and pointed out the place, at the consultation held upon the Thursday.

Mr. Burchall, though he was sensible at the same time there was no other method of saving the limb, did not come into my scheme till some days after: it

* Is it not therefore probable this case would have been lost to the publick, if I had not committed it to paper?

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was upon his giving his consent that he marked out the place, agreeable to Mr. Bent's relation, and, upon my coming into the room, he apply'd to me (if I understood his meaning) to know if we agreed in regard to the incision, to which he received my answer in the affirmative. Mr. Bent says that, " Mr. White took " the forceps and cut off the end, that " Mr. Burchall took the forceps out of " his hands, either to cut off the other, " or to cut off more from that which " was cut, but cannot possibly deter- " mine which."

Upon my asking Mr. Bent very particularly to recollect what he could, relating to the cutting off the extremities of the broken bone, he told me, he perfectly well remembered, that the first end was taken off by myself, but that he could not possibly recollect who it was that amputated the second; that he remembered Mr. Burchall took hold of the forceps, but could not determine with what view he did it, whether it was to

cut

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cut off the other end, or to take something more from one of those upon which I had performed the operation. But I must here again repeat it; I don't pretend to any merit from an operation which is not a difficult one, and therefore I shall not produce any more evidences upon that head. I only mention these circumstances to shew that Mr. Bent has no where contradicted any thing I have asserted.

Though Mr. Marsden does not positively say Mr. Burchall declared for amputation, yet he affirms, that Mr. Burchall said, *He did not know what could be done*; and, when amputation was mentioned, made *no objection to the operation*. Mr. Burchall, though he was pressed to think of some other method, gave him no encouragement to hope for more favourable treatment, and had he had any other method to propose, is it not to be imagined that common humanity would have prompted him, either to have declared his method before Mr. Marsden had

had left the town, or at least to have given him reason to expect the prosecution of a milder practice.

I shall not now detain my reader by any more of my own remarks, but shall lay before him the evidences I have to produce, and leave him to judge not only who has the best right to the invention, but who has taken most pains to preserve that amity which I could heartily have wished to have subsisted, and which ought always to be maintained between gentlemen of the same profession.

F “*Being*

“ Being desired by Mr. Burchall
“ and Mr. White to give an account of
“ the particulars I remembered relating
“ to the case of Robert Elliott, I have
“ wrote the following with the greatest
“ impartiality and strictest truth, ac-
“ cording to the best of my remembrance.

“ I Remember that on December 24th,
“ 1759 (the day of Robert Elliott's
“ admission into the Infirmary) that Mr.
“ White was not there, and that Mr.
“ Burchall desired Dr. Brown (who was
“ then taking in for Dr. Kay, he being
“ at that time ill of a fever) and Mr.
“ Hall to see the boy; and I don't re-
“ member that I heard any method pro-
“ posed, besides amputation, but that
“ Mr. Burchall said, he would take the
“ boy in for a week or two, in order to
“ call a consultation, and see if there
“ might not be some other method pro-
“ posed. That Mr. White came the
“ next morning; and, being shewed the
“ patient,

“ patient, he asked what method had
“ been proposed? I answered, I had not
“ heard any, except amputation; and
“ that, after examining the parts a lit-
“ tle, he said, he thought there was a
“ method by which the boy might be
“ relieved without cutting off the arm,
“ and accordingly described that which
“ was afterwards pursued, and desired it
“ might be told Mr. Burchall, which
“ was accordingly done. I don’t re-
“ member exactly the answer Mr. Bur-
“ chall made upon his first being told
“ this; but I well remember him often
“ repeating, that there could be no
“ other method for saving the limb, but
“ that he had an objection which he
“ thought of great weight against it,
“ viz. the danger of lacerating the ar-
“tery, by turning out the ends of the
“ bone. The consultation, I think,
“ was held about a week before the
“ operation was performed, but don’t
“ remember any thing particularly that

F 2 “ was

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“ was there said or proposed : I remem-
“ ber in the interim betwixt the consul-
“ tation and operation, that one morning
“ Mr. Burchall marked out the place he
“ thought most eligible to make the in-
“ cision in, by pointing with his finger
“ upon the lower edge of the deltoid
“ muscle, on the external part of the
“ humerus, to me, and that Mr. White
“ coming into the room immediately
“ after, he repeated the same to him,
“ who answered in the affirmative, that
“ that must be the place. I don't re-
“ member the particular parts performed
“ by either gentlemen in the operation,
“ but that Mr. Burchall made the in-
“ cision, and attempted to saw off one
“ end of the bone, but made a stand,
“ upon finding it impracticable, in which
“ interim Mr. White took the forceps,
“ and cut off the end; that Mr. Bur-
“ chall took the forceps out of his
“ hands, either to cut off the other, or
“ to try to cut off more from that which
“ was

“ was cut, but cannot possibly deter-
“ mine which. Mr. Burchall was the
“ person who had the chief manage-
“ ment of the patient; Mr. White fre-
“ quently attended the dressings; and
“ one morning I remember Mr. Burchall
“ mentioned the placing the arm in a
“ fracture-box in a direct line, but Mr.
“ White thinking the ends of the bone
“ did not come so well into contact in a
“ streight line, as when the cubitus lay
“ at a right angle with the humerus,
“ said, he could contrive one in which
“ it might lie in that position, and ac-
“ cordingly gave orders for the joiner to
“ be sent to his house, which was done,
“ and a box brought the next morning,
“ which proved greatly too large, upon
“ which he ordered a second, which was
“ likewise obliged to be altered, the
“ board that went on the inside of the
“ arm, from the shoulder to the elbow,
“ being made too long, and with two
“ hinges, one of which being took off,
“ and

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“ and the board cut shorter, the same
“ was used as long as the patient was
“ confined to his bed. As witness my
“ hand,

JAMES BENT.

“ **W**HEN Mr. Barker, of Bake-
“ well, found he could be of no
“ service to my apprentice Robert Elliot,
“ he desired I would get him into the
“ Infirmary at Manchester, under Mr.
“ Charles White’s care. Mr. Ashwood,
“ of Manchester, afterwards undertaking
“ to get him a recommendation, con-
“ trived to have him admitted under
“ Mr. Burchall, saying, he was a per-
“ son he had an opinion of. I brought
“ him to Mr. Ashwood’s house on the
“ Sunday night; Mr. Burchall saw him
“ there that night, and said he could
“ not

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“ not tell what could be done for him,
“ but that he should have the opinion of
“ all the other gentlemen at the In-
“ firmary. I took him to the Infirmary
“ the next day to be admitted, and
“ heard the gentleman that was in the
“ chair ask what could be done for the
“ poor lad? And a person that I took to
“ be one of the physicians, or surgeons,
“ replied, that nothing could be done
“ but taking off his arm. I never heard
“ any other method proposed, nor had I
“ any encouragement to hope for any
“ thing else, though I desired that Mr.
“ Burchall would think of some other
“ method.

EDMUND MARSDEN.

FORD, September 25, 1761.

Sign'd in my presence, and to which he said he would
give his affidavit, if necessary.

Witness SAMUEL BAGSHAW,

*One of his majesty's justices of the
peace for the county of Derby.*

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“ IN December 1759, being an appre-
“ ntice to Mr. White, I attended
“ at the Infirmary in Manchester at a
“ consultation held upon the case of
“ Robert Elliott, the Thursday after his
“ admission into the Infirmary, where
“ Dr. Brown, Mr. Burchall, and Mr.
“ White, were present. As the boy
“ was a patient under Mr. Burchall’s
“ care, he shewed him to the other gen-
“ tlemen, and told them what he knew
“ concerning the accident; and, at the
“ same time, gave it as his opinion (to
“ the best of my recollection) that no-
“ thing but amputation could be of ser-
“ vice, or words to that effect. Mr.
“ White, upon examining the arm, pro-
“ posed that mode of operation which
“ was afterwards pursued. Some ob-
“ jections being started, Mr. White re-
“ plied, that if the plan he proposed did
“ not succeed, amputation might be had
“ recourse to at the last. During the
“ course of this consultation, Mr. Bur-
“ chall

“ he shall never gave any reason to believe,
“ nor did it appear to me that he him-
“ self had the least thought of this me-
“ thod of treatment, nor did he propose
“ any other than amputation. And the
“ week following, whilst the operation
“ was performing, Mr. Burchall said it
“ will never answer; which words he
“ some days afterwards spoke again in
“ my hearing.

WILLIAM STARKIE.

MANCHESTER,

April 29, 1762.

Mr. Poole, the apothecary to the Infirmary, has often said, the boy owed the preservation of his arm to me. I imagine the principal facts I have advanced have been very sufficiently proved by the evidences I have produced; and I hope the reasons I have given why I did not shew the paper to Mr. Burchall previous to its publication, as well as why I omitted the mention of his name, will

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be esteemed satisfactory: But if any of my readers should be of a different opinion, I desire they will do me the justice to remember, that so soon as Mr. Burchall made any remonstrances to me, I readily offered to set the affair in a clear light, either in the British Chronicle, or in any other paper in which the case had appeared. This was certainly doing as much as man could do; and he himself expressed his satisfaction at my proposal. Yet, in a few days after this, he wrote the letter printed in the British Chronicle of the 7th of September, 1761, without so much as mentioning to me that he had altered his opinion. I appeal to the publick whether this was genteel treatment. If the paper I had drawn up had not been satisfactory to him, I should willingly have altered it, as far as a strict adherence to truth would have allowed me.

I had an opportunity of seeing Robert Elliott, and of examining his arm, about Michaelmas last. His master informed me, that after his discharge from the Infirmary,

firmary, in May 1760, he went to work as usual; that he kept well the remainder of the year; but that, in the beginning of 1761, he had the misfortune, by a fall, to break his arm again at, or near, the place of the former fracture; a callus formed, and the lad returned to his business shortly after; but (for want of a due observance of the surgeon's directions) the boy being of a restless playful disposition, the arm became crooked, and consequently shorter than the other. I have only related this circumstance, that I may not be accused of concealing any thing from the publick relative to the case in question.

I am not ignorant of the arts, which some low emissaries have made use of, to depreciate me amongst my friends, of the threats which have been thrown out to deter me from publishing my defence, nor of the methods which have been made use of to prevent my getting evidence, in order to clear myself, and main-

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tain my right to the invention: Such artifices I despise! and such menaces I defy!

A contest of this nature no way tends to the advantage of mankind, nor is the publick interested in the event. The profession hath but too often suffered by differences made publick, whilst the self-interested combatants have only afforded subject for the entertainment and ridicule of the standers-by. In cases like this, an Apology to the Publick is absolutely necessary; but my pardon I hope I shall be able to obtain, as it must be evident from this Narrative, I have done every thing in my power to prevent an open rupture.

I must likewise beg leave to make an apology to those gentlemen whose names I have taken the liberty of making publick, as no other means were left me of setting matters in a proper light.

MANCHESTER,

June 2, 1762.

F I N I S.



